

November 27, 2012

Dr. Vianne Timmons  
President and Vice-Chancellor  
University of Regina

Dear President Timmons:

As faculty and staff of the University of Regina, we write to express our concern that the administration's pending budgetary decisions seriously threaten the academic mission of our university: the creation and dissemination of knowledge through teaching, research, scholarship, and public service. While we understand that the University Leadership Team was required to respond to the provincial government's request that the University and its units indicate how they would meet different funding scenarios over the next three years, we were surprised to learn that the academic units, which are the foundation of the university's academic mission, would be the first to be cut.

We believe that the university's own budget data indicate that the increasing cost of administering our university over the past seven years, and especially the cost of administrative salaries, have absorbed the increases in the provincial government operating grant. Figure 1 shows that while administrative salaries in 2004 totalled \$26 million and equalled 80% of academic salaries, by 2011, administrative salaries had increased by 70%, to \$44 million, and equalled 99.97% of academic salaries. We believe that a university must be well-managed, and that management expertise comes with a price tag. But management of a university must be in the service of the academic mission, not at its expense.

This spending is reflected in the increase in administrative positions (APT, CUPE, and non-academic Out-of Scope) relative to academic positions from 2006-2011, illustrated in Figure 2. Over this 5-year period, academic positions saw a net increase of 3, while administrative positions increased by 89. This is particularly striking, given that during this period, a new academic faculty was created and staffed, with no substantial increase in the overall number of academic positions. We view this as a clear indication that senior management has subordinated the academic mission to the administrative.

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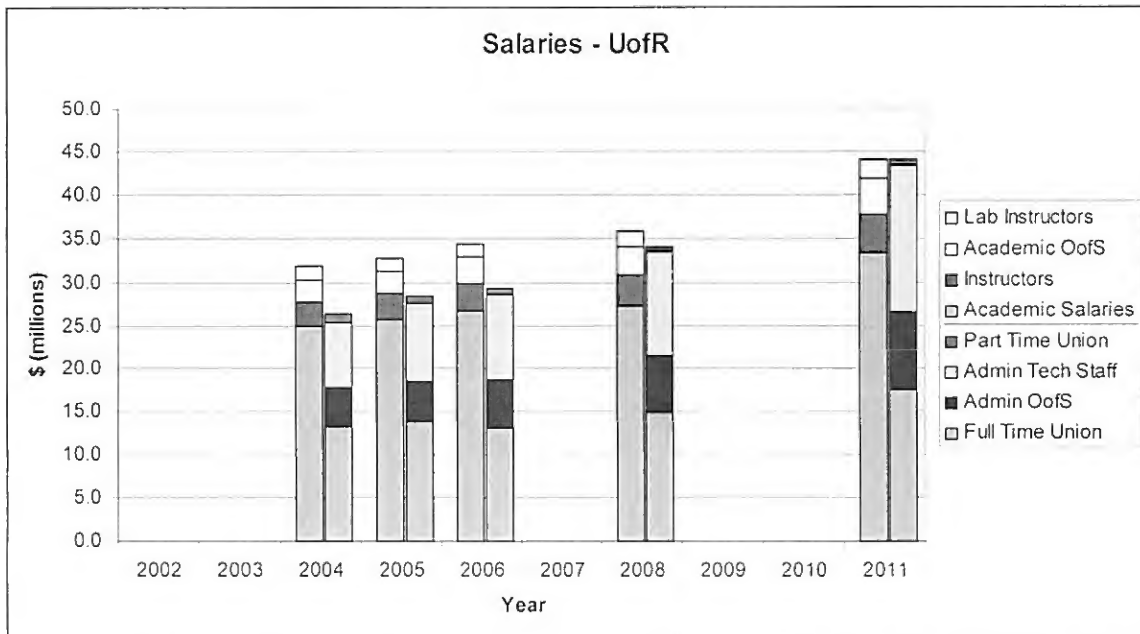


Figure 1. Salaries of faculty, staff, and administrative employees, by account code.

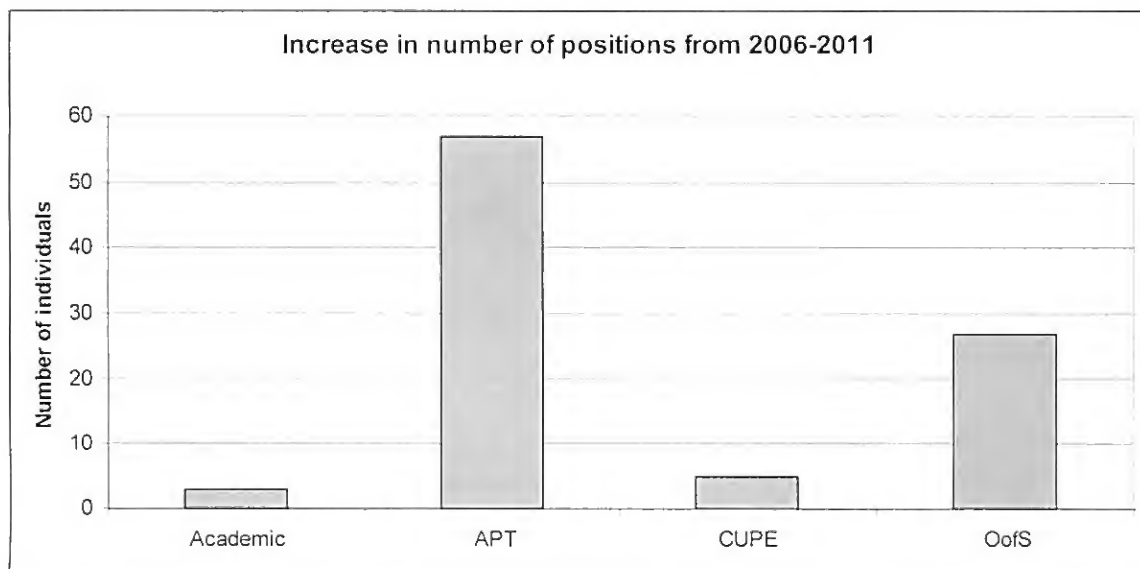


Figure 2. Net increase in the number of academic, APT, CUPE, and Out of Scope positions, from 2006-2011.

Figure 3 compares the average growth in spending from 2004 to 2011 in three categories. Funding to teaching-assistantships, student academic support, student wages, undergraduate awards and graduate awards (combined so as to register on this graph) increased by an average of \$250,000 per year; academic salaries increased by an average of \$1.75 million per year; and administrative salaries increased by \$2.5 million per year, the latter accounting for almost \$18 million dollars over this 7-year period.

Proposed cuts that threaten the academic mission of the University of Regina are not acceptable. The measures that have been suggested include (1) further reduction in the number of faculty positions beyond the reductions we have endured over the last several years; (2) increases in class sizes, with a corresponding reduction in the quality of instruction; (3) reductions to sessional budgets, at a time when many of our programs have been forced by recent budgets to rely on sessionals; (4) reductions to budgets for teaching assistants who play essential roles in delivering high quality education; (5) cuts to academic administration through the elimination of departments and faculties; and (6) additional increases in tuition fees. Each of these measures reduces the quality of education and negatively impacts the future of our students. Together, they would herald the end of the University of Regina as one of the top 10 comprehensive universities devoted to the liberal arts and sciences, as ranked by Maclean's (2012 and 2013).

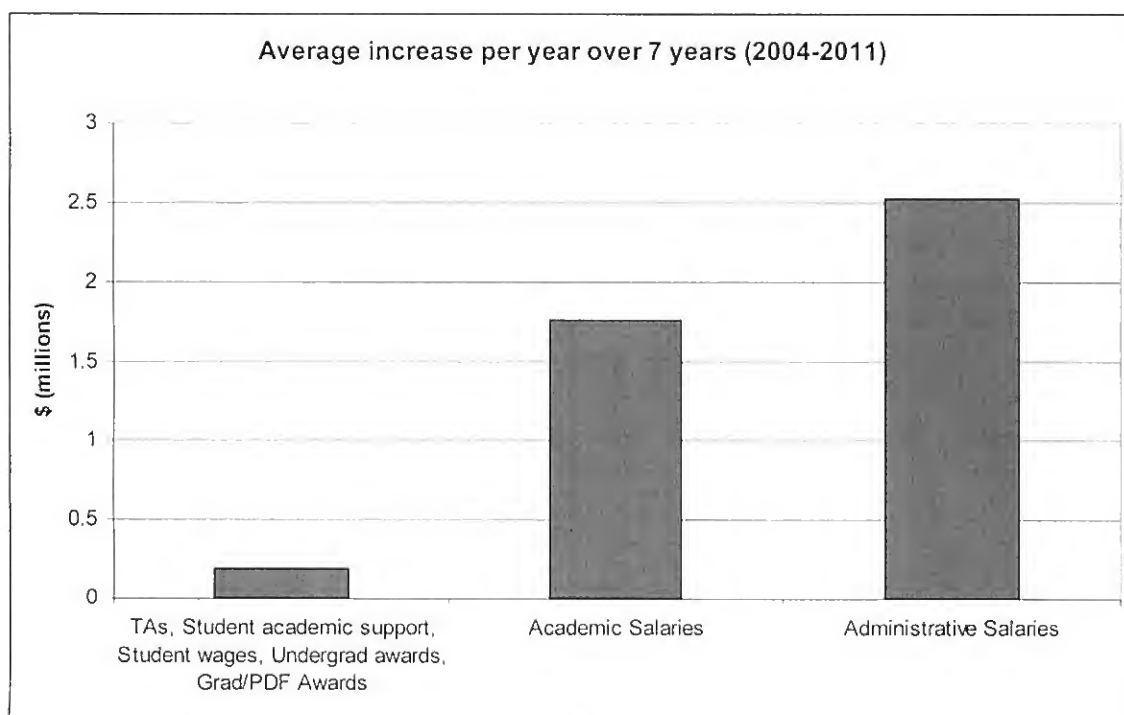


Figure 3. Average increase in annual spending for student, academic, and administrative salaries.

We, the undersigned, are deeply concerned about the future of education at the University of Regina. We respectfully request that you take the following actions:

1. An immediate freeze of all administrative hiring and non-contractual salary increases and bonuses pending an independent and thorough external review of all finances, including spending and revenue by account code, from 2000-2012, and full public disclosure of this review.
2. The development of a 3-year plan for reducing the cost of university administration, including the institution of a hiring committee (having equal administrative and faculty representation) to approve new positions.
3. The development of a 3-year-plan for restoring the university's academic mission to its proper place as the first priority of its budgets.
4. A return to the long-standing practice of publishing an annual Budget Book, complete with all budget allocations, including administrative salaries and overall costs, and their justifications.

Thank you for your consideration. We await your timely reply.

Sincerely,

The undersigned faculty and staff

CC: Members of the Board of Governors, Members of Executive of Council

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